

# Afi's Top 10 *Secrets of Malta*

## **1. MALTA'S PREHISTORIC TEMPLES... DID YOU KNOW THEY'RE OLDER THAN THE PYRAMIDS?**

The prehistoric temples of Malta are the most unique in the world. They are the oldest standing stone structures which remain with us from ancient times, dating from 4000 - 2500 BC. They are older than Stonehenge and the Pyramids. Their architecture is beautiful and inspiring, their scale impressive and yet human. Excellently preserved, they were covered with soil from early times and ignored by the long march of history. They were rediscovered and carefully restored by European and native Maltese archaeologists at the beginning of the 19th century. Because of their uniqueness and beauty, the major temple complexes are deservedly designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

## **2. AN UNBEATABLE CLUBBING SCENE!**

Fix up, look sharp! This year clubland serves up some surprises when it comes to hotspots and the biggest comes from a small Mediterranean island. Forget Ibiza, Malta, traditional favourite of OAP package holiday-makers is now a magnet for Europe's young and restless. Characterised by superb value, Malta's huge open-air clubs, including Gianpula ([gianpula.com](http://gianpula.com)) and Numero Uno ([clubnumerouno.com](http://clubnumerouno.com)), have lately been attracting big-name DJs such as Tiësto and Deadmau5, which in turn has attracted established dance music brands including Creamfields, Ministry of Sound and MTV for the busy summer festival months!

## **3. FRIARS' PRIORY MUSEUM**

The Carmelite Church and Priory Museum has recently been opened to the public. It offers a unique and innovative experience as it is the only monastery in Malta that has opened its doors to welcome regular visitors. The highlight of the place is undoubtedly the Refectory where the friars would congregate for communal meals. It is a rare example of the Baroque concept of the total work of art, where painting, sculpture and architecture come together to create a harmonious whole.

We recommend a concert to be held in the refectory, the proceeds of which will go towards the restoration of the paintings and the breathtaking ceiling of the room which is a masterpiece of ornamentation. Dinner follows afterwards in this unique location.

## **4. THE HYPOGEUM**

The Hypogeum in Malta is a subterranean structure, thought to be originally a sanctuary, it became a necropolis in prehistoric times. It is the only prehistoric underground temple in the world. The Hypogeum was depicted on a stamp issued in the Maltese Islands in 1980 to commemorate the acceptance by UNESCO of this unique structure in the World Heritage Site list. It was closed to visitors between 1992 and 1996 for restoration works and since its recent reopening only 80 people per day are allowed entry and one may need to book as much as 6 months in advance to get in.

## **5. THE POWERFUL PLEASURES OF THE SEA**

In Malta one must experience the pleasures of the sea! Excitement, adventure and fun are all rolled into one for this activity. With a delightful selection of power boats to really wow our guests, we take off on tasks, trails and quests that have our guests bobbing around the Maltese islands.

## **6. MEDITERRANEAN FLAVOURS & CULINARY DELIGHTS**

This activity is great fun and a great excuse to taste some excellent local fair and wines! First on the agenda is a wine learning / tasting session in the cellars where delegates are informed about Maltese wines and typically the kind of food they complement (with some local cheeses... to clear the palette of course!). Working in teams, delegates then create and cook a typically Mediterranean dish, find the perfect wine to accompany it and present it professionally to pass the taste test.

While searching for the perfect ingredients, delegates delve into the island's culture as they experience the Maltese people and its food first hand. Dinner that evening could take place in a 300 year old farmhouse where the guests will have the opportunity to enjoy a typically Maltese dinner in a genuine and rustic ambience cooked by the professionals who will blend the best of local traditions with contemporary techniques.

## **7. ANIMATED TREASURE HUNT IN THE CAPITAL, VALLETTA BASED ON THE KNIGHTS AND THEIR VOW OF CHASTITY!**

This is not the normal hunt. We explore the city built by the Knights of St. John and learn about its dense history. Visit the most interesting places built by the order and meet characters which will take you back in time. The difference? We investigate the secrets and sexual adventures of the Knights and the origin of prostitution in Malta. We pass through mysterious back streets of the city, we discover forgotten corners and bring to life stories and practices that are based on fact and led to most of the wealth that various religious orders have today!

## **8. ROYAL MALTA GOLF CLUB – A MEDITERRANEAN GEM**

There is a sense of history about the Royal Malta Golf Club that is rarely found in the golf clubs that have mushroomed in the Mediterranean. The club is housed in a centuries-old farmhouse, parts of which, like the well-stocked pro shop, have been retained in their original state. Other parts have been extended and modernised to reflect the needs of present day golfers.

One such section is the famed Putters Inn, an exceptional 19th hole, which includes a patio and lawn with views of the 1st, 2nd and 18th holes. Even here, the competition results' boards hanging on the walls date back to 1891, and the trophy cabinet contains cups from the same year.

Golf in Malta started in 1888 when the British colonial governor Sir Henry Torrens introduced the game to the island. It was played in the dry moats formed by the walled fortifications of the capital Valletta. The club moved to its present location in 1904 and its facilities have since improved somewhat. Even so, the course itself is reminiscent of the older courses found in Great Britain.

## **9. LUNA DI SERA... THE CULMINATION OF A PROGRAMME**

Situated in the heart of the magnificent Palace – Palazzo Parisio, Luna di Sera is an evening-only bijoux restaurant with an emphasis on contemporary Mediterranean cuisine. Guests can choose from the intimate candlelit interior or dine al fresco in the floodlit gardens during warmer months. Annexed to the restaurant is the equally stunning Luna Lounge Cocktail Bar where you can start your evening with aperitivo or enjoy a post prandial nightcap. Executive Chef Marco Pinelli leads a team of 14, producing a gastronomic selection of game, fish and fresh, locally-sourced produce. Enjoy a Menu Degustazione or dine a la carte with an extensive wine list to match. Absolutely exquisite.

## **10. GORGEOUS GOZO**

Just a 25 minute boat ride from Malta, Gozo is distinctly different with charming little villages and lush green vales enhancing its rustic allure. Relaxed it may be but you won't fall asleep here as a special treat lies ahead. Spend the day with local farmers, shepherds and their families. Learn about Maltese herbs, press grapes with your feet, bake Maltese bread, enjoy a picnic lunch, go fruit picking, milk goats and learn how to make Malta's renowned sheep's cheese.